

interact with Gen. Hagee during his first few weeks of command expressed this can-do attitude to him in their words and attitudes.

“There are two types of Marines. There are Marines who are in Iraq and those who want to be in Iraq,” Gen. Hagee said during a speech at the Congressional Defense and Foreign Policy Forum in Washington, D.C., July 18. “We have great young Americans in the armed forces today, and they want to be there for one reason – for service.”

After only 26 days, the coalition forces succeeded in liberating Iraq in what President Bush called, “One of the swiftest and most humane military campaigns in history.”

To Gen. Hagee and his Marines, the success of the operation was a simple matter-of-fact consequence.

“The key to victory at war at this level – at the operational and strategic level – is, in fact, sustainment, and we did that. The Marine Corps did that, the Army did that, the U.S. Armed Forces did that,” he said. “Once again, no one can do that better than we do.”

Many valuable lessons were learned from

“No one doubts that when Marines arrive they are ready to fight, and we are going to win. There are two types of Marines. There are Marines who are in Iraq and those who want to be in Iraq.”

**-Gen. Michael W. Hagee,
33rd Comandant**

Operation Iraqi Freedom, according to Gen. Hagee.

Some of the major aspects he emphasized as key to the success of the operation were speed, agility and jointness. Parris Island’s role in the nation’s defense is another valuable aspect in the commandant’s eyes.

“In my mind, the most important lesson coming out of this is we are recruiting the right young men and women from this nation, and we are training them correctly,” said Gen. Hagee.

Nearly 130,000 American troops remain in Iraq today, more than five months since President Bush declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq. As the nation continues on al Qaeda’s trail, Gen. Hagee has his hands full with the ongoing

war on terror.

“Right now we are responsible for the area from just south of Baghdad, starting around al Kut, down to the Kuwait border,” he said. “We’re still fighting. People are shooting at us and we’re shooting at them, but we are making progress over there, and the reason we’re making progress is, once again, back to these great American men and women that we have serving over there.”



Cpl. Ryan J. Skaggs

General Michael W. Hagee, Commandant of the Marine Corps, welcomes the USS San Antonio LPD-17 to the Navy-Marine Corps Team at its christening ceremony.